

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The specification is amended to add section headings. Claims 1, 2, and 4 are amended to refer to receiving “holes.” Claim 1 is further amended to further recite “such that when the seal is in engagement with the receiving holes the hinge is prevented from pivoting movement relative to the bracket.” Support for these amendments may be found in the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 4 of the specification (paragraph [0024] of the published specification) which states that the hinge assembly at location A is provided with a receiving location “in the form of circular hole (21) which will be in registry with a corresponding hole (21a) formed in the corresponding mounting bracket (11).” This feature is illustrated in Figures 3 and 4. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 1 and 3 under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 3341855 to Geisler. Geisler discloses a hinge and bracket closure system for a freight transporter. The bracket (7) is secured in position to the vehicle body (1). A hinge (5) is secured to the bracket by a hinge bolt (9) so as to allow pivotal movement of the hinge relative to the bracket. Two lugs (15) extend internally from bracket (7) and two support bars (12) extend internally from hinge (5) whereby the ends of the bars (12) are configured to engage with lugs (15) when the doors are in the closed position as illustrated in Fig. 2. The bar ends comprise a concave receiving surface (13) for seating about lugs (15). The lugs (15) are integrally affixed to the bracket (7), as shown in Fig. 3.

Geisler does not disclose the hinge (5) and bracket (7) comprising receiving holes to receive a customs seal such that when the seal is in engagement with the receiving holes the hinge is prevented from pivoting movement relative to the bracket. Indeed, the hinge and bracket system of Geisler may freely pivot about hinge bolt (9) when the lugs (15) are present. In Geisler, the positioning lugs (15) engage with concave receiving surface (13) to prevent the door from being removed from the frame in the event that the hinge pin (9) is removed. Geisler’s lugs (15) are not a customs seal, and the lugs do not affect the pivoting movement of Geisler’s hinge. Because Geisler fails to disclose each and every feature recited in the rejected claims, Applicant

respectfully submits that the claims are not anticipated by Geisler. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under Section 102(b).

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The Office Action rejected claim 2 under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Geisler in view of Lanigan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,931,033, hereinafter “Lanigan”). The Office Action rejected claim 4 under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Geisler in view of Mahaney (U.S. Patent No. 6,406,074). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Lanigan. The Lanigan patent was cited for the purpose of disclosing doors that overlap. The Lanigan patent, however, fails to disclose those features recited in claim 2 that are lacking in the Geisler patent, discussed above. In other words, the combination of Geisler and Lanigan fails to disclose all of the features recited in claim 2. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 would not have been obvious from the combined teachings of Geisler and Lanigan.

Mahaney. The Mahaney patent was cited for the purpose of disclosing a frangible customs seal. Mahaney discloses a destructible locking device “of the type employed to releasable interconnect mating components of security devices. Such security devices are widely employed by public utilities to secure meters, supply valves, etc. against unauthorized access.” Column 1, lines 6-10. The Office Action argues that it would have been obvious “to include the frangible customs seal as taught by Mahaney on the device of Geisler to detect the illegal entry when the hinge and bracket move disassembling the customs seal.” The Office Action fails to identify how or where a frangible customs seal would “obviously” be included in Geisler. It appears the Office Action may assume that Geisler’s lugs (15) would be replaced with Mahaney’s frangible customs seal. However, as explained above, Geisler’s hinge and bracket may freely open and close without disturbing or “disassembling the customs seal.” Therefore, even if a person having ordinary skill in the art were to replace Geisler’s lung with a frangible customs seal, Geisler’s device would not “detect the illegal entry when the hinge and bracket move” as argued in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 would not have been obvious from the combined teachings of Geisler and Mahaney.

Appl. No. 10/566,023
Amdt. dated August 20, 2007
Reply to Office Action of May 18, 2007

Moreover, the Mahaney patent, however, fails to disclose those features recited in claim 4 that are lacking in the Geisler patent, discussed above, such that the combination of Geisler and Mahaney fails to disclose all of the features recited in claim 4. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 would not have been obvious from the combined teachings of Geisler and Mahaney.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the foregoing rejections. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. R. Witt", is written over a horizontal line.

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Date: August 20, 2007
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